

than the rules on the books in blue States like New York and Delaware. Texas passed a law that switched off some one-time COVID exceptions, like keeping polls open in the middle of the night.

These mainstream laws brought a torrent—a torrent—of hysteria from the far left, from corporate America, Hollywood, and the corporate media rushed to condemn laws they hadn't even read. It was almost completely untethered from reality. One poll a few months back found that less than half of 1 percent of Americans said voting laws were the country's most important problem. More Americans actually believe current voting laws are too lax than believe they are too restrictive. But the far left bubble became fixated—fixated—on this nonissue.

The manufactured outrage just kept coming. At the peak of the crescendo a few months back, 48 of 50 Senate Democrats voted to break this institution—to break this institution—to ram through a 3-year-old voting takeover bill on a partisan basis. That is how close we came.

Now, fortunately, a bipartisan majority saved the Senate as an institution, and now, we are seeing the hard evidence that, as we all knew, the hysteria was never based on fact to begin with.

Georgia's primary election day is today. But we already know a lot, thanks to early voting figures.

And here was a Washington Post headline a few days ago, "Voting is surging in Georgia despite controversial new election law."

The story goes on:

[R]ecord-breaking turnout is undercutting predictions that the Georgia Election Integrity Act . . . would lead to a falloff in voting. By the end of Friday, the final day of early in-person voting, nearly 800,000 Georgians had cast ballots—more than three times—three times the number in 2018, and—

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higher even than in 2020, a presidential year.

Turnout is up despite the fact that fewer Georgians are availing themselves of the State's no-excuse mail-in voting. Georgians are getting back to in-person voting, a return to prepandemic norms, and doing so in huge, huge numbers.

The reporter quoted one 70-year-old Black voter who was stunned by the easiness of the voting process after all the disinformation that had been thrown around.

Here is what she said:

I had heard that they were going to try to deter us in any way possible . . . [so] [t]o go in there and vote as easily as I did . . . I was really thrown back.

Shame—shame—on the Democrats who pushed the Big Lie that a grand scheme was afoot to prevent millions of Americans from voting. It was never true. It was just to push their pre-existing policy agenda. The fake hysteria was just a pretext to push a sweeping national takeover of election laws that Democrats had already had on the shelf for a number of years.

Now the rhetoric is proving false right before our eyes. These common-sense Republican laws appear to be achieving just what the American people want. The American people want to make it easier to vote and harder to cheat.

This whole episode proves exactly why our democracy still needs its cooling saucer. This is exactly the reason why the U.S. Senate exists, so that one party cannot lose its head to a short-term fever and upend massive Federal laws on a partisan basis under false pretexts.

Thank goodness—thank goodness—a bipartisan majority stopped Democrats from destroying the Senate over this fake issue a few months back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, it has become clear over the last few months that too much of the Republican Party has been taken over by MAGA Republicans, who are now dominating the party and Republicans in the Senate, moving the party away from things it has often stood for in the past.

The contrast has become clear: Democrats, for instance, want to codify a woman's freedom to make decisions about her own body into Federal law, but MAGA Republicans want to take away women's rights by pushing national abortion bans, jailing women and doctors for carrying out abortions, and even pushing bans with no exception for rape or incest.

In the wake of the Buffalo shooting, MAGA Republicans continue embracing unhinged conspiracy theories like the "great replacement," which has been a rallying cry for ultranationalists and White supremacists in Europe for years.

And all year long, while Democrats have been pushing solutions that will lower costs, MAGA Republicans and the chair of the Republican campaign arm openly support raising taxes on the poor and working families, while cheering on inflation as a "gold mine." And those were Senator SCOTT's words, not mine. He called inflation a gold mine. Imagine.

MAGA Republicans are showing Americans exactly who they are. In an amazing happening this weekend, the Conservative Political Action Conference, the largest conservative organization in America, held their conference in Hungary and welcomed one of Europe's most notorious proponents of "replacement theory," Viktor Orban, as their keynote speaker.

Again, the Conservative Political Action Conference, a very important organization in the new Republican MAGA party, had Viktor Orban as their keynote speaker, an autocrat, who has whittled away democracy in Hungary.

It is sickening—sickening—to see that 2 weeks after the shooting in Buffalo, Republicans as prominent as Donald Trump and Tucker Carlson, spoke at the same event as one of Europe's most prominent White nationalists and authoritarians. It is a scary and otherworldly turn for one of America's two parties to take.

I know not all Republicans embrace the views of MAGA Republicans. I know many of them support women's rights and embrace diversity and reject conspiracies like "White replacement."

I urge these Republicans in the Senate and the country to repudiate the MAGA wing taking over the GOP. I invite the voters to support Democratic candidates as a protest against extremism so we as a nation can halt the dangerous rise of the hard right.

This week, all of us in the Senate will have a chance to take a stand against extremism by voting to begin debate on the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act.

For the information of all, I will take the first procedural step on this legislation later today, and Members can expect to vote on Thursday on this bill that will crack down on domestic terrorism and extremism.

As far as legislation goes, this bill is as much of a no-brainer as it comes. Two years ago, when Donald Trump was President, the House passed this bill unanimously. Every single Republican was for the bill. But in a sign of how radicalized the GOP has become, nearly every single House Republican opposed it last week, despite one Morning Consult poll that showed that a majority of Republicans and Republican voters support these common-sense measures.

Let me say it again. According to one Morning Consult poll, a majority of Republican voters support cracking down on domestic terrorism. Yet, nevertheless, every single House Republican voted against this bill last week.

If you wanted some proof that the MAGA wing of the Republican Party is taking over the whole party, there it is.

I hope that, given everything happening across the country right now, Senate Republicans will act differently and support this bill.

Let me be clear, Democrats' goal is to pass this bill, just as it is with all bills we bring to the Senate floor. But if Republicans keep going down their extremist, obstructionist path, then this vote will still allow the American people to hold their elected representatives accountable.

Not long ago, views like "replacement theory" were relegated to the fringes of American society, shared primarily by twisted minds on online message boards. But today, White supremacy, which has been with us for decades